

significantly less well off than your parents' generation.

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If you care about America's global leadership, if you yearn for our country to have the resources to combat global scourges, if you hope for the day when there is a cure for cancer and Alzheimer's, you should press Congress and the administration to step up to the plate now.

We must all ask ourselves: Do we want to make a point or do we want to make a difference? If the answer is the latter, then it is clear that this is a conversation we need to be having today. We must not put it off.

At his 1796 farewell address, George Washington admonished his fellow countrymen, "We should avoid ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden of which we ourselves ought to bear." An apt charge for today's political leadership.

A brief word to America's faith community, who should be intimately concerned with the moral component of this crisis. If we say we care about the poor, we must speak up, for they will be the hardest hit if we fail to act. If we say we are passionate about justice, then we must not be complicit in committing a massive generational injustice.

Not only is our current course immoral, it is un-American. Generations past have always passed the torch of the American Dream to their children and their grandchildren. Presently, we're poised to hand off the struggling flicker of a flame.

The implications of an America on decline also has ripple effects the world over.

In a December 5 Washington Post Outlook piece, author Robert Kaplan hauntingly writes, "America's ability to bring a modicum of order to the world is simply fading in slow motion." A look at the daily headlines and we are reminded that the world is a much more dangerous place when our Nation is perceived as weak, or worse yet, when that perception becomes a reality.

Surely we can agree on the enormity of what is at stake. The precise blueprint for how to move forward may seem blurry at times, but the implications of doing nothing must propel us onward.

If we summon the courage to act, I believe we can see a rebirth in America marked by grand innovations in science and technology that are the wonders of the world, advances in medical research that save millions of lives, and further exploration into the remaining frontier of space and much more.

Columnist Tony Blankley wrote recently, "America has become a great Nation because we have been an optimistic people who insist on both success and liberty. America's can-do spirit has been the wonder of the ages. It has raised us from a handful of farmers

to the colossus of the planet. And if we can regain that spirit, there is not a reason in the world that the 21st century will not be the American century—just as the 20th century was."

I was reminded once again of that unique American spirit on Election Day when I stopped by the Snow White Grill in Winchester, Virginia. While I was there, one man said to me, "We are ready! We are prepared to sacrifice. We're ready to do what's right." And several others at the lunch counter echoed the same.

But the question remains: Are America's leaders prepared to sacrifice? Are America's leaders prepared to do what's right?

Battle lines have been drawn on both sides.

The MoveOn.orgs of the left and the Americans for Tax Reform of the right have wielded their political influence with remarkable effect, only to paralyze the Congress and the Obama administration on arguably the most important issue of our time. I am not prepared to continue to let that happen.

In 1787, on the final day of the Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin was said to have wept when he signed the document. James Madison wrote in a letter to Thomas Jefferson, "Whilst the last members were signing it," he said, "Dr. Franklin, looking towards the President's chair, at the back of which a rising sun happened to be painted, observed to a few members near him that painters had found it difficult to distinguish in their art a rising sun from a setting sun."

And then Dr. Franklin remarked that during the course of the session, "I have often looked at that picture . . . without being able to tell whether it was a rising or setting sun." And then Franklin continues, "Now . . . I have the happiness to know that it is indeed a rising, not a setting sun."

Every politician loves to say that the sun has barely begun to rise on America and that America's best days are yet ahead.

If we steel ourselves for tough decisions and commit to doing the right thing, if we work for economic and moral rebirth, then we will honestly be able to join the chorus of voices reaching back to our Nation's founding and echoing across the ages which enjoin us to believe that the sun has indeed barely begun to rise on our country and that America's best days are yet to come.

This is a call to action. We are Americans, and we can prevail.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of official business in the district.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legis-

lative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. HINOJOSA) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. HOYER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. DELAURO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

The following Members (at their own request) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:

Ms. FOXX, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HURT, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, January 24, 2011, at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

149. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Force Health Protection and Readiness), Department of Defense, transmitting a report to Congress on pain care initiatives provided by the health care programs of the Department of Defense; to the Committee on Armed Services.

150. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting notification that effective November 7, 2010, the danger pay allowance of 20% for Haiti has been eliminated, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 5928; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

151. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Interagency Working Group on U.S. Government-Sponsored International Exchanges and Training FY 2010 Annual Report, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2460(f) and (g) Public Law 87-256, section Section 112(f) and (g); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

152. A letter from the Chairman, Broadcasting Board of Governors, transmitting a report on the information security program and practices of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, pursuant to Public Law 107-347; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

153. A letter from the Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 Annual Financial Report; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

154. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting a report to Congress on a gift of land in Tulare and Kern Counties, California, from the Wilderness Land Trust, pursuant to Public Law 93-632; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

155. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting a report to Congress on a gift of land in Kern County,